

W YMAN (Mor.)

Progress in School Discipline.

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IN THE

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

ADDRESSED TO THE CITIZENS OF CAMBRIDGE.

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BY MORRILL WYMAN, M.D.



CAMBRIDGE:

PRESS OF JOHN WILSON AND SON.

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THE following pages contain the substance of two addresses,—delivered, the one, at a meeting of the citizens of Cambridge, in November, 1866; and the other, before the American Institute of Instruction, in Boston, in August, 1867.



## PROGRESS IN SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

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WHEN flogging was practised in the American navy (prohibited, by Act of Congress, since Oct. 15, 1853), it was the duty of the medical officer of the ship to examine the victim, and report upon his ability to bear punishment. It was also his duty to witness the punishment; for he was charged by law to see that no man received an injury which would deprive the state of his services. Probably very few commanders would have been willing to take the responsibility of inflicting a single blow in opposition to the opinion of the medical officer. It would seem proper that members of the medical profession should not forget their duty, either as physicians or citizens, nor withhold any useful suggestion their experience may have taught them with regard to this same corporal punishment in one of its last holds. Physicians may know better than the master how much children can bear, although they may not know how much the master may deem it proper to inflict.

With regard to myself, I have been for a brief period a teacher in a public school, have been for several years a member of the School Committee, have had children in the public schools, and have taken an interest in those schools which has not yet ceased. I may therefore be supposed to have an

amount of knowledge with regard to children and their wants, and the public schools and their wants, equal to that of the average of my fellow-citizens. Besides which, the very duties of my profession lead me to mingle with the community, in its different classes, to a degree which must be very rare among teachers. I may therefore be supposed to know something of the feelings of the community upon the subject of corporal punishment, which has of late attracted not a little of my attention. But I have another and a more personal reason for interest in this question. A few months ago, a professional gentleman, eminent in his calling, requested me to visit his wife, who, he said, was sick with consumption, was near her end, and little could be done for her; but she had requested to see me. She was on her bed, emaciated, and her voice but a whisper. My visit done, I left the bedside: she called me back, and said, with whatever of strength she could command, "I have children in the public schools; I have all a mother's anxiety for them; I am to live but a few days; and I cannot die without thanking you for your efforts in behalf of school children, and urging you to continue them. My belief is, that those who now oppose you will before long be with you." This was the only time I ever saw her: in four days she died. These considerations must be my apology for returning to the subject.

It may be taken for granted, that no teacher would resort to corporal punishment, if he were convinced he could obtain as great success as easily without as with it. To think otherwise, would be a great wrong to the body of teachers. That a greater weight of evidence may be required to convince some, than will be required to convince others, there is no doubt. The natural disposition of the teachers, their early education, religious views, age, greater or less conservatism, — all these may make a difference: still, if they were convinced, they would abandon the whip. Far be it from me to



add to the labors, or impede the success, of so valuable a profession. I hope only to lessen their labors, and to secure to them the respect of the community; which, it is to be feared, their present course with regard to corporal punishment greatly imperils. I think it can be shown, that such punishment, in the case of girls, should be forthwith abandoned. Others think differently: they think it necessary. It will, however, be remembered that, in other similar cases, corporal punishment was once thought necessary; but it has been abandoned, and the supposed necessity found not to exist. One thing is certain: the practice of whipping for offences has been steadily diminishing, and society demands it should continue to diminish. Wherever it has ceased, it has never been revived.\*

In the middle ages, a sect of Christians, rejecting the sacraments of the Church and all other means of grace, placed their only hope of salvation in faith and flagellation. But these people whipped themselves, not others. They have few followers at the present day, certainly not among teachers of our public schools. The public whipping-post was once thought essential to the good order of our towns; and whipping was practised in Boston at a time and place when and where it could be seen by the children coming from school. Now, even in South Carolina, it is abolished. Governor Orr, in his inaugural address of last December, declared that a man who had been whipped could "not command moral courage sufficient to enable him even to make an

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\* Let no one so far misunderstand my position as to suppose me opposed to all restraint and coercion in our public schools. If the whipping complained of were everywhere abolished, there are other punishments and incentives to which no objections can be made, and which are equally effective for purposes of discipline; as is proved by the experience of the best teachers. In August last, I was requested, by the American Institute of Instruction, to give them my views upon the corporal punishment of girls. A clergyman and teacher from Monson, in answer, attributed to me the proposition to cure all the evils of schools with one remedy, which he called quackery. But, instead of recommending one remedy and excluding all others, I recommend all remedies, excluding one.

effort at reformation." Once it was supposed, that no ship-master could govern his crew without the lash; now it has ceased throughout the navy and mercantile marine, and, it is said, with great advantage to the service: at any rate, I have never heard of any proposition for its re-establishment. In the prisons and houses of reformation of Massachusetts, it is no longer permitted, even upon the worst of criminals. It was found to be unnecessary, and gave rise to the most fearful abuse. By common law, husbands could once whip their wives, and masters their apprentices: now the whipping of either is a punishable offence.

Lunatics being supposed to be devoid of reason, it was also supposed they must be governed, as the lower animals are governed, by fear. More than forty years ago, insane persons were brought to the McLean Asylum, of which my father was physician, securely bound, and led by a keeper, whip in hand; and I remember the amazement of that keeper when the lunatic was unbound, and remained quiet. He said there was a power in the physician's eye, a something, under which the patient quailed. There was a power in his eye; but it was the "omnipotence of loving-kindness," — a power I would fain see extended to other fields than that in which he gained such signal success. Where is the man who would now dare, in any civilized community, to whip an insane person? We should as soon think of whipping a man in the delirium of a typhoid fever. Certainly, if an unreasoning lunatic can be governed without whips, they can be dispensed with in the case of a reasoning girl in a public school. In truth, the difference between children, and those whose reason is disturbed, is not great: in the one, the faculties are irregularly excited or irregularly developed; in the other, the same faculties are as yet undeveloped. In both, the treatment may not greatly differ.

We see, then, that corporal punishment has been steadily



retreating before civilization, and is now practised in the school and in the family only. In the schools of Massachusetts, it is practised to an extent far beyond what is allowed in the schools of Europe. As this statement has been denied with a good deal of pertinacity by those who are determined to uphold the present practices, the following article, from the Boston "Daily Advertiser," for which we are responsible, is printed entire:—

#### CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN EUROPEAN SCHOOLS.

*To the Editor of the Boston "Daily Advertiser."*

President Sears, of Brown University, in a letter upon the Prussian school system, says "there is no prohibition of corporal punishment in any case." This letter was read in Cambridge, at a public meeting, called for the purpose of sustaining the School Committee in their refusal to rescind a rule authorizing the whipping of girls. Believing that corporal punishment—especially of girls—is practised in Massachusetts to an extent quite unknown in European schools, I have made careful inquiries as to the facts in the case. I am the more inclined to make public the results of these inquiries, from seeing it reported in the "Daily Advertiser," that "Mr. Philbrick [a member of the State Board of Education] presented evidence to show that corporal punishment had not been so generally abolished in the schools of Europe as had been represented. Holland and Prussia were especially mentioned as still permitting the infliction of flogging in schools."

I think I shall be able to show, that the statements of both these gentlemen are erroneous. However correct they may have been at some former period, these countries, in their progress, have passed through that stage of civilization during which it is thought that schools cannot be successful without resort to the flogging of boys and girls, and even *young women*.

The following statements, with regard to Prussia, Holland, and Austria, were most courteously sent me by the Ministers of the respective countries resident at Washington, in answer to inquiries made through the kindness of Senator Sumner.

*Prussia.*—Baron Von Gerolt, Prussian Minister at Washington, writes as follows:—

"PRUSSIAN LEGATION, 26th January, 1867.

"In answer to your inquiries of the 15th instant, I have the honor to state, that no corporal punishment is allowed, by law or by practice, to be inflicted upon any pupil in the public schools of Prussia, except at the request, and with the understanding, of the parents in particular cases."

From this it appears, that *corporal punishment is now prohibited in Prussia in all cases, except at the request of the parents in particular cases.*

Nearly a quarter of a century ago, Hon. Horace Mann, then Secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, visited Europe, for the purpose of inspecting the schools. He asked Dr. Vogel, of Leipzig, whether corporal punishment was still used. Dr. Vogel answered, "that it was still used in the schools of which he had the superintendence. But," added he, "thank God, it is used less and less; and, when we teachers become fully competent to our work, it will cease altogether."

It had *then* become so rare, that, during the six weeks that Mr. Mann visited the schools, "containing tens of thousands of pupils," he says, "I never saw one child undergoing punishment, or arraigned for misconduct; I never saw one child in tears from having been punished, or from fear of being punished."

*Holland.*—Baron Von Limberg, Minister of the Netherlands, writes:—

"WASHINGTON, 9th March, 1867.

"His Majesty's Government, to whom I referred your letter of the 15th January, has enabled me to give the following answers to your inquiries:—

"The Netherlands laws on education do not allow corporal punishment in the schools. It is not practised in the *public* schools: if, very exceptionally, an instance of it occurs, the authorities immediately intervene. In the *private* schools, which in this respect are less restricted, corporal punishment is, for as much as the Government knows, also not practised. Though the Government could not give a positive assurance, that in no case whatever a girl in a public or private school does not receive any corporal punishment, it can be stated, that, in general, girls, of whatever age, do not undergo the punishment in question."

In 1843, Mr. Mann says of Holland, "In its excellent and well-ordered schools, scarcely a blow has been struck for more than a

quarter of a century. In cases of incorrigibleness, expulsion from school was the remedy." This must have rarely been resorted to : for Mr. De Vries, of Harlem, told him "he had kept the same school about twenty years ; that its average number had been six hundred scholars ; that not an instance of corporal punishment had occurred during the whole time ; and that two only [boys] had been expelled from it, as hopelessly incorrigible."

*Austria.* — Baron Wydenbruck, the Austrian Minister, gives me the following : —

"AUSTRIAN LEGATION, 27th January, 1867.

"In answer to your letter of the 15th instant, I beg to state, that neither in Austria nor Germany is corporal punishment practised in the schools. . . . The severest punishment is usually imprisonment for a certain number of hours. Should a pupil prove unmanageable, expulsion from the school is resorted to."

Thirty years ago, Mr. Turnbull — quoted in Barnard's "German Schools" — says, "The law with regard to corporal punishment allows of its infliction, with a rod or stick, 'only in cases of great faults.' Even in these cases, this kind of punishment may only be administered after having obtained the consent of the overseer [of the school] and of the parents of the child, and in their presence."

*France.* — The London correspondent of the "Daily Advertiser," a gentleman fully qualified to give an opinion in this matter, under date of Feb. 2, 1867, says : —

"I should like to set one gentleman right, who has expressed his disbelief in the abandonment of the rod in the schools of Europe. He may be assured, that corporal punishment is being abandoned on this side of the Atlantic. Such a thing is scarcely heard of in Europe. I suppose you would not find a public school in the French empire in which a blow is allowed to be given by a master to a child." \*

Selection of pupils in the schools will not account for the abandonment of corporal punishment in Prussia ; for the attendance on the

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\* I have made no inquiry as to the existence of corporal punishment in the schools of England. The following extract from Horace Mann's seventh report will show the condition of things at the time of his visit: "I was standing, one day, in conversation with an assistant teacher, in a school consisting of many hundred children, when, observing that he held in his hand a lash or cord of Indian-rubber, knotted towards its end, I asked him its use. Instead of answering my question in words, he turned round to a little girl, — sitting near by, perfectly quiet, with her arms, which were bare, folded be-



public schools is more general there than in Massachusetts, as the following figures show :—

*Prussia.* — Whole number of school age, of all stations in life, in 1855, 2,943,251 ; whole number in elementary schools, 2,758,472.

*Massachusetts.* — Number of persons between five and fifteen years of age, May 1, 1865, 255,323. Number of scholars of *all ages* in the public schools in winter (season of greatest attendance), 231,685.

Facts are here given with regard to corporal punishment in the above-named countries from the best authorities within my reach : they are, to my mind, conclusive that their school-system is, in this respect, far in advance of ours.

If exceptional cases of this punishment occur, — and it is not denied they may, — they will be found to be at variance with the spirit of the system, and the general practice of the schools. They should no more be cited as evidence of such spirit and such practice, than cases of murder or theft in Massachusetts, however well substantiated, should be taken as evidence of the legality of such crimes here. After this testimony, I shall be surprised if it can be shown that “ Holland is still permitting flogging in schools,” as stated by Mr. Philbrick ; or that, in either of the countries above named, three thousand seven hundred and sixty-five floggings have been inflicted, in one school year, upon fifteen hundred and sixty-two pupils, nearly one-half girls, — as, it is alleged, has been done in a single school district in Boston.

Dr. Sears, in a subsequent note, thinks corporal punishment “ is forbidden only with respect to girls.” As this is the only point which is urged at present, it gives me pleasure to add his confirmation. It is to be hoped, that our teachers, school committees, and citizens will be led to the conviction that our schools must be reformed, if we would have them, in this respect, equal to the schools of Europe. They may also rest

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fore her, and lying upon her desk, — and struck such a blow upon one of them as raised a great, red wale, or stripe, almost from elbow to wrist ! ”

The education of the people of England is greatly neglected. Common schools are unknown ; and it is only since the extension of the right of suffrage that their necessity has been recognized. As a member of Parliament expressed it, “ We must now teach our masters their letters.”

assured, that the flogging of girls in school may be safely abandoned in Massachusetts, because it has been successfully abandoned elsewhere.

In Phillips Exeter Academy, under the direction of Dr. Benjamin Abbott and Dr. Gideon L. Soule, for whom I desire to express all that gratitude which is due to wise and faithful teachers, not a blow has been struck for more than thirty years; and yet, in the opinion of the most competent judges, this school is the best in the country. In the numerous private schools for girls, we never hear of corporal punishment; nor is it probable a school could be supported in which it is allowed.

In our sabbath schools, it was never practised, or has entirely ceased. Indeed, in these schools every thing is done to make them attractive, — pleasant discourse, pretty books, pleasant picnics, and all other means which may be thought interesting: never blows. And yet in these schools are gathered, or should be gathered, weekly, many children of the lowest classes, — those who are under the greatest disadvantages at home; many who, from poverty, must aid in the support of the family during the week, and the incapacity or neglect of whose parents leave them no other opportunity for religious instruction. Why the wide difference between the two classes of schools as to discipline?

The State of New Jersey abolished corporal punishment by Act of Legislature in 1866. In Cincinnati, Ohio, a judge declared that the law did not authorize the teacher to inflict it; consequently its infliction is assault and battery, and punishable as such.

Last year, the whipping of a girl of sixteen in one of the public schools of Cambridge attracted the attention of the citizens. The School Committee having declared that the punishment is strictly within the rules for the government of the schools, a petition, bearing the names of more than three

hundred of the citizens, was presented to the Committee, requesting that the corporal punishment of girls be abolished in each and every public school in the city. The petitioners express their belief, "that such acts are brutalizing to the teachers, injurious to the pupil, and shocking to the community." Among the signers of this petition are the following:—

JAMES WALKER, D.D., *Ex-President of Harvard College.*

THOMAS HILL, D.D., *President of Harvard College.*

Professor H. W. LONGFELLOW.

JOEL PARKER, *Royal Professor of Law.*

EMORY WASHBURN, *Bussey Professor of Law, and member of the Massachusetts Board of Education.*

BENJAMIN PEIRCE, *Professor of Astronomy and Mathematics.*

ASA GRAY, M.D., *Professor of Natural History.*

JEFFRIES WYMAN, M.D., *Professor of Anatomy.*

JAMES R. LOWELL, *Professor of French, Spanish, and Belles Lettres.*

JOSIAH P. COOKE, *Professor of Chemistry and Mineralogy.*

W. W. GOODWIN, *Professor of Greek Literature.*

JOHN K. PAINE, *Instructor in Music.*

L. R. WILLISTON, *Principal of the School for Young Ladies.*

This petition was subsequently sustained, at a public meeting of the citizens, by Governor Washburn, Professor Agassiz, and other gentlemen. Soon afterwards an article appeared in the "Massachusetts Teacher," in accordance with a vote passed at a "meeting of the Boston schoolmasters, at which about two-thirds of the whole number were present." In this article, the expression of opinion by the gentlemen above named was styled "a singular exhibition of a species of presumption;" and it was still further declared, that all questions with regard to schools should be left with "the class of teachers and the class of committee-men." When we consider the peculiar gifts of Professor Agassiz as a naturalist and teacher, his eloquence as a lecturer, the vast stores of his museum, the work of his life,—all of which he has, year



after year, laid at the feet of the teachers of Massachusetts, without money and without price, — we should suppose that “two-thirds of the Boston schoolmasters” would have hesitated a moment, and, even in mere show of gratitude, made some acknowledgment before they indorsed such censure and such rebuke. Besides, in what does the presumption of the petitioners consist? These gentlemen are men of education, eminent in their various callings, many of them engaged for the greater part of their lives in the work of education. They have families; they have an interest in their own children, and have some experience in their education; they have an interest in the public schools; and some of them have been members of the School Committee. Nor is this all. Our School Committee, as by law required, have laid before them annually a printed report, containing a detailed account of the condition of the schools. In 1864, this report contained the following: “It is granted that whipping is altogether wrong as a discipline for girls.” This report is signed *unanimously* by the Committee. Again, therefore, we ask “two-thirds of the Boston schoolmasters” wherein lies the “presumption” of these gentlemen in expressing their opinion, that the whipping of girls should be abolished. Are they not safe in expressing an opinion which coincides with that of “the *class* of committee-men”? — if, indeed, the word *class* can, with any propriety, be applied to those who are chosen to serve for a single year. Does a young woman of eighteen or twenty, just appointed a teacher in a public school, for this reason alone, know more of children and their management than her mother, who has brought up a family? Does a young man, who, upon his graduation, is appointed a teacher, necessarily know more of human nature, and the management of children, than his father, who has just paid the last of his college bills? Would it be “presumption” in mother or father to express an opinion, not upon

the method of teaching, but upon the discipline, so far as related to the whipping of girls?

But the gentlemen who signed that paper go farther. They say that, in their opinion, such acts are "brutalizing to the teacher, and injurious to the pupil." These are general propositions, upon which they are quite as able to pass judgment as those who attempt to criticise them. They also say they believe such punishments to be "shocking to the community" in which they move. Upon this point also they are qualified to express an opinion,—quite as well qualified as the editor of the "Massachusetts Teacher" is to express an opinion as to the influence of such punishments upon the community of teachers in which he moves. The editor, with a carelessness much to be regretted, says (September, 1867, p. 320), "The advocates for the immediate abolition of corporal punishment are all men who have never kept school in their lives,—governors and clergymen, physicians and professors of zoölogy; men of kind hearts and impulsive feelings, but men wholly ignorant of practical teaching." With regard to Professor Agassiz, he says, "When a natural-history professor comes down to a caucus, and says, 'I have taught thirty years, and never struck a blow,' it is much as if the respected minister of the First Church of Cambridge were also to come and say, 'I, too, have taught thirty years, and have never whipped one of my congregation.' " \* Now, what

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\* As the "Massachusetts Teacher," which derives its importance from being the acknowledged organ of the teachers, has industriously endeavored to make it appear that Professor Agassiz has never "taught school," we give the following note. The editor of that journal has charged the petitioners with making "random and unmeaning assertions:"—

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOÖLOGY, AT HARVARD COLLEGE,  
CAMBRIDGE, NOV. 7, 1867.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,—If I am to be ruled out of the corps of teachers, I should like to know what are the qualifications which entitle me to have an opinion about matters of education. My claims to a voice on these subjects are the following: I began teaching a Latin class at fourteen years of age, and have taught to this day without intermission, vacations excepted. During my College and University years, I taught, both privately and publicly, for ten years, classes of children (from four to six or seven years of age), of

are the facts? Of the gentlemen whose names are given above, as the editor of the "Massachusetts Teacher" well knows, the larger part were, probably, at some period of their lives, teachers, schoolmasters; he knows that one of them is a member of the State Board of Education, and especially charged with the care of the public schools. One of them he knows personally as a ripe scholar, who, having completed his education in Germany, became a teacher in the public schools of Cambridge, bringing to them talents and success of the highest order; and, after years of valuable services in the public schools, is now the principal of a school for young ladies, confessedly one of the best in the country.

Of the members of the Cambridge Committee who are understood to be ardent supporters of the rule authorizing the whipping of young women, most are persons who have probably never been teachers,—certainly not professional teachers. No one of them is now a teacher in a public school; and, with one exception, no one has been, within the past ten years. Five, including the editor of the "Massachusetts Teacher," are serving on the Board now, for the first time. Now we ask, Are they better qualified to give an opinion upon the points in question than the gentlemen who signed the petition, and who are, as we have seen, so flippantly criticised? Have they any peculiar gifts which qualify them to

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boys from twelve to sixteen years, and young men. At the age of twenty-five, I became college professor. I have held such an office ever since. But, in leisure hours, I have continued, wherever I have been, to give elementary instruction in schools and colleges, and to lecture before popular audiences. In this country I have attended, for about ten years, the Teachers' Institute; for seven years I have kept a private school for young ladies; besides giving a great many public lectures in almost every State in the Union. My official connection with the Lawrence Scientific School dates back from the year 1847.

I have thus been a teacher for forty-six years; and, during the whole time, I have never found it necessary to inflict any corporal punishment upon any of my pupils.

Let those who deny me the right to express an opinion concerning the management of public or private schools, show more comprehensive claims, and I will remain silent.

Ever truly your friend,

DR. M. WYMAN.

L. AGASSIZ.



express an opinion, and maintain it with such pertinacity, against the opinion of the Committee of three years ago, which declared, "that whipping, as a discipline for girls, is altogether wrong"? The teachers of Massachusetts may rest assured, that the declaration at the head of that paper is "no random and unmeaning assertion."

More than four months after the petition was presented, the Committee printed and distributed "An Address to the People of Cambridge," in which they gave their own views of corporal punishment, and supported them with an elaborate argument. It was carefully considered by the people to whom it was addressed. After two months, these views were fully discussed in a public meeting. The Committee was dissatisfied with the result of that meeting, and called one of its own. It put itself before the community on the simple question of the corporal punishment of girls, and was completely defeated. Of the three thousand four hundred votes cast, it received but four hundred and fifty. A great deal has been said about exaggeration and excitement. These are the facts: a more deliberate vote could hardly have been taken. The whipping of girls is "shocking to the community."

The "Address," inasmuch as it embodies the views of those who believe that corporal punishment of both sexes is essential to the success of our common schools, deserves attention. It would seem to be more properly a defence of the position assumed by the Committee and of their rule. By this rule, as it now stands, *any pupil, without distinction of age or sex, must be whipped whenever the principal shall so determine, whatever the force required to accomplish it.*

I propose to examine some points so far as they apply to girls. This Address is signed by the Committee unanimously; and among them are some of those who, two years ago, declared that "whipping of girls, as a discipline, is altogether wrong." It opens with an account of the case of Josephine Foster. I

regret that the Committee did not see fit to furnish us a plain statement of facts, instead of their own views, opinions, and inferences. We could be safely trusted to draw our own inferences, without their guidance. I am willing to take the case as it is found in the Address, notwithstanding its considerable variations from the facts as elicited on the examination. And what are briefly these facts? A girl, not in good odor with her teacher, is detected in whispering. She is thought defiant, and is sent to the recitation-room to be whipped. The teacher followed, almost immediately, with a rattan, intending to punish her; but found the pupil too old, or too strong, or both, and concluded to await the return of the principal, when it was arranged that the girl should be whipped by one of the female teachers, assisted by another. According to this programme, the whipping commenced. The screams were loud, and reached the adjoining room. The whipping was continued until the principal came into the room, when it was discontinued; and the principal took the place of one teacher, and directed the other to whip till the girl ceased screaming: which was done, and the principal left the room. The two teachers were now left alone with the girl: she was told she had submitted to the principal, and must now submit to them; and was whipped a third time. The Committee tell us "there was no trace of improper motive on the teacher's part." Will they tell me what *proper* motive could have actuated those teachers in that third whipping? I certainly know of none. These are the facts, as given by the Committee themselves. Now I wish to ask what has been gained by this display of violence. Has the pupil been improved? has school discipline gained? have the teachers gained in reputation? has the fair fame of the city gained? has any interest been advanced, except the interests of the private schools of the city?—and these, if I am not greatly misinformed, have been very materially advanced.

The view taken by the Committee in the investigation of this case cannot be overlooked. "The Board," says the Address, "had to exercise a *judicial* office, and therefore could inquire into and determine only the question of an alleged transgression of their rule. It was this question alone that both parties appealed to the Board to decide; and, having passed upon that, they had no further duty in these proceedings." A more unfortunate view of the duties of the School Committee, for the children, could hardly be taken. So far from only sitting in judgment, and listening to complaints, and taking testimony which may be presented, I apprehend it is their duty to make such examination into the condition of the schools as shall effectually bring to light misdemeanors of the teachers towards the pupils, — not only as regards teaching, but to see that they treat them at least with humanity; and at once to take such measures as shall protect the children from wrong. Besides, the Board is a legislative body: it makes rules; it made the rule under which this girl was whipped; and if the Board sees abuse arising under this rule, and in consequence thereof, it is a bounden duty to abolish it. But when the Address goes on to declare, "Still less could the Board try these teachers by the standard of what its members might have thought it proper to do in the case, had they themselves stood in the place of the teachers," — we may well ask, By what standard shall they be tried? Are ten men, placed in such a responsible office, to ignore common sense in this matter of school discipline? Under such a state of things, the only safe course is an appeal at once to the legal tribunal. Let the case be examined by those who are authorized to exercise judicial powers. We shall then have some settled policy, and effectually prevent the "misrepresentation," "the prejudiced and exaggerated accounts," of which the Committee so loudly complain.

The Committee say it is because parents do not abandon



the rod at home, that it is found so difficult to dispense with it at school ; that the public schools embrace children of both native and foreign parentage, from all the various classes of our society ; and that " the persuasive influences of home discipline " are needed. Now, I do but repeat the expression of one of the best and wisest friends of our school system, when I say it is one of the main objects of the common schools to seek out those children who have suffered in their homes from neglect, and the ill consequences of vicious parentage ; who have never known what kindness and gentleness are ; who have daily fallen under cruel blows, from parental hands that should have been outstretched for their support and protection ; to gather these unfortunate beings into a new fold, where it is the duty of the teacher to show, and the duty of the School Committee to aid him in showing, by kindness and gentleness and sympathy, that there is something besides stripes and blows in God's world : and not, because she has not already felt " the persuasive influences of home discipline," to redouble the blows in severity and in number, until, after three successive whippings, she shall acknowledge " the abstract beauty of unconditional submission."

The Committee speak of the teacher as standing *in loco parentis* (in the place of a parent). I apprehend that this expresses but a part of the relations between the teacher and pupil. He stands, not merely in the place of a parent, but in the place of a *wise* and *good* parent. The city of Cambridge does not pour out a hundred thousand dollars annually on her public schools, that they may be supplied with teachers who take for their example the worst parents, or even excel them, and become originals in this wretched competition. For where can you find, in this community, a man who lays any, even the slightest, claim to the character of a good parent, who whips his daughter, after she has arrived at the years of womanhood, three successive times for *any* offence ?

No: we have a right to expect our teachers will bring to their work intelligence, fidelity, and a sound judgment, united with kindness, sympathy, and a calm temper; and these, I am bound to say, do not appear in three of our teachers. The Address then passes in review the various kinds of punishment now in use in our public schools, and enumerates the objections to them; and I am ready to admit, that the objections are well-founded. One thing I must say, in passing: in the whole of these twenty-four pages, I do not find a single allusion to *rewards* and *encouragements*, nor yet to that system of checks and credits, by which, as it seems to me, the school accounts may often be satisfactorily settled. The Committee does not say that it proposes to sweep away all unobjectionable forms of correction, and substitute corporal punishment; but this last is the only one defended, or even mentioned with approbation. But if this is the plan of their new campaign, and this the principal arm to be brought into use, the sooner we flank them the better. With regard to expulsion from school, the Committee is more definite. They draw a lively picture of the effect of dismissal from school: the pupils will seek it. They intimate that life and property will not be safe, the haunts of ignorance and crime will be recruited, the houses of correction filled, and our public schools decimated into the reform schools.

Now, all this is said within sound of the College bell. One third of all the classes which enter Harvard College disappears, in one way or another, before graduation: some for inattention, some for misdemeanors and insubordination, and some for much more serious offences than any ordinarily found in our public schools; and yet we do not learn that they ordinarily become thieves or murderers, or even necessarily get into the State prison; and, if this is not true of those who assemble in colleges, to assert it of young girls is simply absurd.

As to the right of the School Committee to suspend and dismiss children from the public schools, there is no doubt. This is clearly stated in the opinion of Chief-Justice Shaw, in the Charlestown case, some years ago. "Schools are established for the benefit of all the inhabitants. The enjoyment of this benefit, then, is a common, and not an exclusive or personal, right; then, like other common rights,—that of way, for instance,—it must be exercised under such limitations and restrictions that it shall not interfere with equal and co-extensive rights of others." \* The Committee seem to forget, that good children have rights as well as naughty children; that they have a right to receive the benefit of the provisions made for their education; and if these naughty children interfere materially with the good conduct of the school, or if their repeated correction would so take up the time and

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\* The following extracts from Judge Shaw's opinion, in the case *Sherman v. Inhabitants of Charlestown*, 8 Cushing Reports, p. 160, will show the views of the Court as to the rights of pupils, and duties of school committees:—

"On general principles, it would seem strange, if, in the establishment of such a great public institution as that of the public schools, in the benefits of which the whole community has so deep and vital an interest, there were no power vested anywhere, sufficient to protect the schools, thus established, from the noxious influence of any one whose presence and influence would be injurious to the whole, and subversive of the purposes manifestly contemplated by their establishment. But the Court are of opinion, that the schools have not been left by the law without reasonable protection in this respect; and that a power is vested in the general school committee,—or the master, with their approbation and direction,—to exclude a pupil, although within the prescribed age of seven and sixteen, for good and sufficient cause. . . .

"These schools are established for the benefit of all the inhabitants. The enjoyment of this benefit is therefore a common, not an exclusive, personal right; then, like other common rights,—that of way, for instance,—it must be exercised under such limitations and restrictions, that it shall not interfere with the equal and co-extensive rights of others. Take the case of contagious disease. Can it be doubted that the presence of a pupil infected could be lawfully prohibited,—not for any fault or crime or wrong conduct, but simply because his attempt to insist on his right to attend, under such circumstances, would be dangerous and noxious, and so an interruption of the equal and common right? It seems to be admitted,—if not, it could hardly be questioned,—that for misconduct in school, for disobedience to its reasonable regulations, a pupil may be excluded. Why so? There is no express provision in the law authorizing such exclusion: it results, by necessary implication, from the provisions of law requiring good discipline. It proves that the right to attend is not absolute and unqualified, but one to be enjoyed by all, under reasonable conditions. But it is argued, that though good discipline may be maintained within the school, yet the master and the Committee have no right to



attention of the teachers and pupils as to cripple its action, they should be removed, and provision made for them elsewhere,—in a separate school, perhaps, and under more favorable circumstances for their reform.

The kind of punishment we have under consideration has an injurious effect upon the good and sensitive children; and, the better and more refined they are, the more their suffering. Who has not seen the distress of a little girl when one of her female mates is subjected to the whip? It is almost like striking herself. I know it was once thought that such scenes of suffering are especially useful to the virtuous; but, for myself, I would no more have my daughter hear or half-hear the sound of the whip and the screams of the victim, than I would send her to a public execution. Again, it is said by some teachers, in defence, that such sensitiveness is mere sentimentalism, and, however great at first, soon wears off, and ought to wear off. To this I can only answer, I know of no branch of mere human knowledge I would not prefer

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look beyond the walls of the school to take notice of the conduct of its pupils. We cannot perceive the force of this distinction, pressed to the extent to which the argument attempts to carry it. Truancy is a fault committed wholly beyond the precincts of the school; yet no example is more contaminating, no maleconduct more subversive of discipline. May not an incorrigible truant be expelled,—not as a punishment merely, but as a protection to others from injurious example and influence? . . . It may be urged, that if this power exists in school committees, they may exercise it arbitrarily and unjustly: but the answer is, that such a power must exist somewhere; that all power conferred for good may be abused to wrong uses. But this power is intrusted to bodies under all the responsibilities which can bind any public officers to the faithful performance of duty in such a trust. They are chosen by their fellow-citizens for their supposed capacity, impartiality, and fitness; and they are liable to be removed by the same constituents. Their acts are not done in a corner; the performance of their duties is open and public; and they make returns to those fully competent to judge of the propriety of their conduct. . . .

“Under the light afforded by these means of exposition, we think the whole tone and tenor of the laws demonstrate, that it was the intention of the Legislature to make the public schools a system of moral training, as well as seminaries of learning. If such is the manifest intention and purpose of the schools, then it is as necessary, in the unreserved intercourse of pupils of the same school, as well without as within its precincts, to preserve the pure-minded, ingenuous, and unsuspecting children, of both sexes, from the contaminating influence of those of depraved sentiments and vicious propensities and habits, as from those infected with contagious disease.”

my daughter should forego, rather than have her sensibilities so hardened, or so nearly destroyed, that she can look upon human suffering unmoved. That this bears upon both sexes, is obvious; but, in consequence of the organization their Creator has given them, it bears more heavily upon girls than upon boys. For this reason it is, among others, I would have separate schools for the sexes.

Again, how many little girls are so sensitive, that, when they have a hard lesson, or feel ill or unable to confine their attention, the very thought of punishment for a single error almost deprives them, not only of the power of reciting, but even of getting a lesson, — they are in utter despair.

If such a state of things continues, parents who can afford it will be compelled to send their daughters elsewhere; a course which, while it deprives them of their rights, deprives them also of their interest in the public schools.

But we are told that a bad girl is worse than a bad boy. The Rev. E. H. Sears,\* in an article supporting the necessity of whipping girls in the public schools, says of them, "Why, they induce to a refinement of wiles and subtleties and depravities, which leave the boys and men a good way in the distance." Still further we are told, that there are girls in the public schools who are so lost to all sense of decency, so vicious, that they cannot be influenced by reason nor kindness, and can be managed only by whipping. Now, let me ask, do those who make these statements mean that such girls shall be kept in school to contaminate all the good children? Can any teacher prevent such contamination? Will whipping prevent it? It may make the girl hypocritical, mean, and cunning; but will it make her a fit associate for good girls? Shall parents be advised to send their daughters to associate with such girls? The question seems to be, Shall such girls

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\* Unitarian Religious Monthly Magazine, January, 1867.

be removed from school, or shall we convert our public schools into reform schools? There is no question in my mind as to our duty in this respect.

"American youth," says the Address, "for the reason that they are born to an inheritance of unparalleled individual freedom, stand in peculiar need of the early acquisition of a reverence for law and its administrators." We have no doubt that there ought to be, and that there is, a peculiar reverence for law in this country. The only question is this: whether this reverence is, or should be, brought about by reason, or the "plantation whip"? shall our children be led, or shall they be driven? In the only statute of this Commonwealth upon the duties of instructors, the words are: "It shall be the duty of the president, professors, and tutors of the University at Cambridge and of the several colleges, of all preceptors and teachers of academies, and of all the instructors of youth," to endeavor to *lead* their pupils, as their ages and capacities will admit, to a clear understanding of the tendency of "a love of their country, humanity, and universal benevolence." Now, we ask, is this to be done with the whip? Are American children to be educated, with the whip, to a love of country, *humanity*, and *benevolence*? Whatever the imperfections of teachers and bad management of schools may have produced, it certainly was not the intention of its founders that this fair system of common schools, which has been of so slow a growth, and required so much wisdom to bring it to its present proportion, should be upheld by a force which has been banished from our prisons and penitentiaries.

The last point in the Address I propose to notice is, that the Committee are of opinion that the abolition of flogging on shipboard has been followed by more cruel consequences; and they express their fears, that the same cruel consequences may follow the abolition of the flogging of little girls. I will give them the credit of consistency in these expressions;



but whether the community partake in these fears, I have very grave doubts. As to the last fear, it vanishes, at once, under the watchful care of a good and faithful School Committee, who take care that those teachers who exhibit a tendency to cruelty or bad temper, silently and speedily disappear from the schools.

Mr. Lincoln, a Boston master (Social Science Meeting, Jan. 24, 1867), is reported as saying, "The record of corporal punishment in schools worked great injury, leading masters to forego corporal punishment in order to gain popular favor, or to adopt worse forms of punishment." — "One half of the evils in our schools are occasioned by lack of home government; one quarter, the result of the present school system; and the other quarter are intended by the Almighty." How the master came at such exceedingly definite results, he does not explain; but, on his own supposition, we may say of the first, it is not a matter under the control of the master; to the third, we must bow in submission; but the second, which includes the whipping of girls, may and should be dealt with at once.

Rev. Dr. S. K. Lothrop, of Boston, in the School-committee meeting at the close of the last year, also opposed the plan of recording the number of cases of corporal punishment; saying the record is unnecessary, and ought not to be kept. He also censures a member of the Board (Dr. Ordway) for publishing the number of cases of corporal punishment reported from the schools. Dr. Lothrop declares the record unnecessary, but gives no reasons. Mr. Lincoln is more definite: it has diminished the number of whippings, and occasioned worse punishments. As to the second reason: it is quite clear that a man, who cannot be trusted with a limited power, without danger of abuse, should by no means be intrusted with an unlimited power. Of the whippings, twenty thousand were reported last year, — quite enough,

one would think, to satisfy any friend of humanity. If, as is stated, the best masters are those who whip least, one valuable test of ability is lost by omitting the record. Is there no danger of injustice from such irresponsible power? A pupil is taken alone into a room by the master: no sound comes from that room, but those from the blows of the master's whip and the sufferer's screams. If cruelty is practised, how shall it be made evident? The pupil's mouth is closed; the master alone is heard; and, if the master is ingenious, the evidence of his cruelty—even if he wantons in it—will not be found on the pupil's person. Rev. Dr. Lothrop is unwilling to continue the medal system, because of the lack of impartial teachers. Where is the greater danger of partiality,—in the distribution of a few medals annually, under the supervision of the Committee; or in inflicting twenty thousand whippings in the same time, without responsibility, without record, and without report? Even with all the checks and guards we now have, a Boston teacher has recently been punished by the courts for cruelty, and dismissed from the school. In Cambridge, within a month, a female teacher has been dismissed for the same reason. But, if we would know what may be the result of irresponsible power over children, we have but to read the recent Report of the Directors of Girard College: a more sickening record can hardly be found.\* For the good of both teacher and pupil, let these checks be increased, rather than diminished.

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\* The Directors of the Girard College removed President Smith on the eleventh day of September, 1867; and subsequently published an address to the public, in which they say, "Inefficiency was bad enough; but something more than inefficiency was constantly ringing in the ears of the Directors,—clamorous appeals for relief against cruel punishments; mothers in tears at the private houses and places of business of Directors, begging for justice to outraged children; pupils showing purple welts and the marks of cruel stripes upon their persons; boys incarcerated under lock and key, for weeks upon weeks, in midwinter, in the topmost rooms of the college buildings, where no heat was allowed them, no light permitted when evening came, no books given them to read; stripped of their clothes, in some instances partially, and in others almost entirely; obliged to

Of the value of records and reports, we have good evidence in our own city. After the attention of the public was called last year to the condition of the public schools in Cambridge, the Committee modified the rule with regard to corporal punishment, so that it can be inflicted by the principal only, or with his or her consent; and the offence, the circumstances, and severity of the punishment must be reported to the Committee. In their subsequent Report, the Committee say, "We are now able to state, after the brief experience that has been made with the amended rule, that it has actually diminished the number of corporal punishments in some of our schools by at least two-thirds. If the Committee could be assured that this diminution in the number of punishments by the rod had been attended by no loosening of the bonds of wholesome discipline, they would regard the results thus far attained with a more unmixed satisfaction." On another page of the same Report we find the following: "In some of these schools there has been a very encouraging degree of progress during the past year, in the way of intellectual growth; while it may be claimed for all of them, that they have maintained their previous standing in this respect."

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answer all the calls of nature in these rooms, and fed upon bread and water; children condemned to the House of Refuge, on the application of the President, without knowledge of their mothers or friends, and without any opportunity of appeal; new and ingenious modes of punishment, which were but the synonym of torture; utter want of sympathy for the mute appeals of orphanage; and disregard for the feelings and rights of mothers, as shown in the denial of their most innocent requests. These are a sample of what the Board could no longer withstand.

"Notwithstanding that the evidences of the punishments inflicted, as well as of the condition of the discipline which has existed in the college, are to a large extent in the hands of the President alone, and not accessible to the Board, some statements made in his reports, or derived from the official records, are appended, which will sustain the action of the Directors.

"As an illustration of the floggings which have disgraced the college, the President reported, that, from the 1st of January, 1864, to the 31st day of May, 1864,—a period of five months,—two hundred and forty-nine corporeal chastisements had been inflicted, of which sixty-eight had been administered by his own hand. After this, the public will not be surprised to learn, that, since the 7th of September last, the number of cases absconding in the college have amounted to seven per cent of its entire population."



Exactly what the Committee means by "discipline" is not stated. With different teachers and committees it has widely different meanings. One teacher calls the discipline good when every child is in its place, as near motionless as possible,—“so that you can hear a pin drop;” another, when the children are attending to their lessons at the time required, with only that amount of movement and relaxation which every child must have, and which does not disturb others.\* Whatever meaning the Committee attaches to this term, it is gratifying to know, that the relaxation of the bonds of discipline did not prevent, in some of the schools, a very encouraging degree of intellectual growth; nor did it prevent any from fully maintaining their previous standing in this respect. As intellectual growth is one of the most

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\* Teachers and school committees are liable to fall into great error with regard to the ability of children to sit still. Children are endowed with this intense desire for activity by their Creator, for their health and development. No school can be deemed perfect, which, in its exercises, does not recognize this desire, and, by frequent interruptions of study, gratify it. Even adults cannot sit still many minutes at a time. Upon this point, notwithstanding the censure which has been dealt out to physicians by “two-thirds of the Boston schoolmasters,” I will take the liberty of quoting a passage upon this subject, by that distinguished physician and physiologist, Sir Charles Bell:—

“Without meaning to impute to you inattention or restlessness, I may request you to observe how every one occasionally changes his position, and shifts the pressure of the weight of his body. Were you constrained to retain one position during the whole hour, you would rise stiff and lame. The sensibility of the skin is here guiding you to that which, if neglected, would be followed even by the death of the part. When a patient has been received into the hospital with paralysis of the lower part of the body, we must give especial directions to the nurse and attendants that the position of his limbs be changed at short intervals, that pillows be placed under his loins and hams, and that they be often shifted. If this be neglected, you know the consequence to be inflammation of the parts that press upon the bed; from which come local irritation, then fever and mortification and death.

“Thus you perceive, that the natural sensibility of the skin, without disturbing your train of thought, induces you to shift the body so as to permit the free circulation of the blood in the minute vessels; and that, when this sensibility is wanting, the utmost attention of friends and the watchfulness of the nurse are but a poor substitute for this provision, which nature is continually affording. If you suffer thus, lying on a soft bed, when deprived of the sensibility of the skin, how could you encounter, without it, the rubs and impulses incident to an active life? You must now acknowledge, that the sensibility of the skin is as much a protection to the frame generally, as the sensibility of the eyelids is to the eyes; and gives you a motive for gratitude which probably you never thought of.”

important objects in our public schools, this statement ought to be an encouragement to take another step, viz., the abolishing of the whipping of females. Perhaps this also will be found to be no detriment to intellectual growth.

A further advance has now been made, which must be, to all friends of humanity, a subject of hearty congratulation. It is understood that no case of corporal punishment of a girl in the High or Grammar Schools, containing nearly three thousand pupils, has been reported to the Board during the past year: it may therefore be safely inferred, that very few, if any, have occurred. This, it must be observed, has been accomplished under a Board, a majority of which strongly urges the necessity of corporal punishment. Those teachers, by whose skill, patience, and humanity this most gratifying change has been brought about, should be assured that their efforts are fully appreciated by the wisest and best men in the community. If, during the next year, we have a Board opposed to corporal punishment, we may take the next step, embracing the remaining schools.

Notwithstanding all the checks we now have over corporal punishment, an unfortunate case has recently occurred, of a nature which forbids that it should be passed over in silence.

Oct. 22, 1867, a message was received, requesting me to examine a little girl, who had been cruelly beaten by a female teacher in the Centre-street School. She is nine years old, light complexion and hair, slight form, and active. She had been beaten the previous day. At the time of examination, she had upon her left shoulder-blade a patch of extravasated blood, the skin nearly black, measuring three inches in one direction, and three and a half in the other; the whole tender, swollen, and puffy, from the blood effused. There were two other patches on the right shoulder-blade, half an inch wide, — apparently made by the edge of the piece of wood with which she had been beaten, — the blood standing in points, as though

just oozing through the skin ; also a discoloration on the upper part of the right arm, where she had apparently been severely grasped. The appearances indicated great violence. The shoulder-blade is thinly covered,—in some parts, very little more than the skin. Repeated blows upon such parts, with a hard, unyielding body, not only produce intense suffering, but are very apt, especially in delicate persons, to injure the bone and its coverings, and produce serious consequences. The effect of the blows had not disappeared eight days after their infliction.

The report of a schoolmate, corroborated by others, is as follows: The girl was first beaten on the hands, while in her seat, for disturbing the girl in front of her ; subsequently, for a similar offence, she was taken from her seat to the floor, and beaten on the back with a ruler ; then thrown upon the teacher's platform, and held down while she was again beaten.

The father of the girl, on his return from his work at night, took her to the police station at the City Hall, to enter a complaint ; but he was told it must be entered at the police court. From the police station she was taken at once, by a city officer, to the City Hall, and exhibited to many members of the city government. Those who saw her deemed it proper that a legal investigation should be had. Although one of the Committee was understood to have seen the employer of the father, and to have requested his influence to prevent a complaint, the father appeared at the police court. The editor of the "Massachusetts Teacher," also of the Committee, was present at my request, that the Board might be apprised of the proceedings from the beginning. The child's back was examined by the judge ; but, as one of the Committee had previously seen the judge, and requested that the complaint be not received until the case had been investigated by the Board, the father was directed to appear two days after.

In the mean time, one of the Committee called upon me



with the teacher. They both declared they had no defence to offer for the treatment the little girl had received. The teacher confirmed the report of the girl's schoolmates; except that she did not lay her down on the platform and beat her, but seated her on the platform after beating her. The teacher had been in charge of the school only thrēe or four days. She said the school was very disorderly, but she had not intended to inflict corporal punishment, until advised to do so by another teacher, who gave her a ruler for that purpose. She then commenced whipping,—did not know how many; kept no record; did not know it was required. The ruler she used was fourteen or fifteen inches long, one and a half or two inches wide, and of the ordinary thickness. The next day she was dismissed by the Board.

The gentlemen above mentioned requested that no complaint be entered; and, on the understanding that an effort would be made to rescind the rule authorizing the whipping of girls, a proposition was made to the father to withhold the complaint for the present. To this he acceded.

Some points in this case deserve serious attention. It is stated that this teacher came highly recommended, as a young woman of kindness and humanity, and well qualified in other respects; and for these reasons was selected by one of the gentlemen of the Board most opposed to corporal punishment. If this be so, it is clear there is something wrong in a system that, in so short a time, deprives her of all those qualities, and leads her to such abuse of a female pupil. Had she adhered to the principles which had heretofore guided her, she might for a time have had difficulties; but she was safe. The moment she adopted the system enforced by a majority of the Cambridge School Committee, her fate was sealed. Heavy blows fell fast and thick upon — she knew not how many — children, until she committed an indictable offence, and was dismissed, the victim of a system. It was that system which put the

ruler in the hands of a teacher, as yet untried by the Committee, without sufficient restraint; and it is answerable for the consequences. Another thing is clear: if the Committee had heeded the petition of some of the wisest and best men in this community, — who requested the abolition of the whipping of girls, on the ground that “it is injurious to the pupil, brutalizing to the teacher, and shocking to the community,” — this little girl would not have received this cruel treatment, which no power on earth can undo; or, if the opinion of the citizens, expressed by a vote of five to one last autumn, had been heeded, this would not have happened. How true it is, that those who resort to force must beware lest they perish by force!

It is only by bringing such cases before a legal tribunal that their merits can be understood, the children protected from the violence of unskilful teachers, and the teachers themselves — secured from exaggeration and misrepresentation — “receive that impartial treatment from their fellow-citizens which is granted to every one else.”

Why should not girls be treated as boys? Because girls are not boys. Every parent having children of both sexes, knows that they have moral characteristics which at once distinguish them before they arrive at the usual school age. They are weaker in body and more sensitive in feeling; and are more occupied with the impression they make upon others, long before they know its value. That delicate sense of propriety which distinguishes the woman, has already its germs in the girl. They seem to know instinctively that they cannot rely upon physical strength, and as instinctively cling to others for support and protection. They are gentle, docile, confiding, and affectionate. They exhibit these gentler qualities, at home and in school, in a thousand ways; they hasten to meet their teacher as she approaches in the morning; they run by her side, they seize her hand, and evince their affec-

tion by kisses upon her cheeks and roses upon her desk. The skilful and faithful teacher takes advantage of these qualities, especially of their docility; and so moulds them, that corporal punishment is not only unnecessary, but it is cruelty.

Physiologically, she is different; and to this I would most earnestly beg your attention. Her blood corpuscles are smaller, her nervous system is of a more delicate structure, her brain is lighter, and her muscles smaller; she is made for quickness and vivacity, but not for strength and endurance. The same reasons which prevent her from sharing the rougher games and plays of boys, should protect her from suffering the harsher punishments of boys. She is more sensitive to internal emotions and external sensations; and I assert, without fear of contradiction, that no physician can be safely trusted to advise for the preservation of health or its restoration, who disregards, even in the child, the distinction of sex. The most eventful period of her physiological life is spent in school. During this period, there is not unfrequently mental uneasiness, irritability, and depression, — easily mistaken for petulance and defiance by the unwise, and, I greatly fear, has sometimes produced punishment for that for which she is answerable to her God alone.

With a rapidity of development unknown in the other sex, she becomes a woman, with all a woman's refined sensibilities, hopes, and fears. She now instinctively knows, that upon the good impression she makes upon others is based her hopes for the future. If her physical organization is sensitive, her spiritual nature is doubly sensitive; and it is this which makes her what she is. It is in vain to count the number and weigh the severity of the blows upon her person, and note the hours that elapse before their marks disappear. Her spirit is wounded, she is disgraced and degraded; years may not efface the consequences. It is this that stirs the sensibilities and brings down the censure of the greater part of the civilized



world; and from none is that censure more severe than from cultivated women. Strike not a woman, even with a feather, is the motto of civilization; it is in accordance with the spirit of Christianity also.

But, in consequence of her greater sensitiveness to external impressions, a blow of equal force produces a more serious effect; and this, together with the fact that early womanhood is the period at which diseases of the brain and nervous system are most readily and most frequently developed, should lead us to beware lest the most serious consequences follow the violence done to mind and body by corporal punishment. I say this not without good reason. Within three months, the city of Cambridge has paid a bill for the maintenance of a young woman at the Worcester Asylum, who became first epileptic, and then insane, after (and, as her physician believes, in consequence of) a blow on the head with a ferule in the hands of one of our former female teachers. And what is the crime which induces teachers to run the uncompensated risk of such fearful results? It may be whispering; it may be the neglect of a lesson. For the protection of teachers, then, it would be well to abolish the corporal punishment of girls.\*

The Committee tell us, that taking away the power of corporal punishment from one sex of pupils would "make a

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\* The "Massachusetts Teacher," in its editorial department, September, 1867, p. 319, has the following upon this passage: "One illustration used in Dr. Wyman's argument we think that teachers have a right to complain of. Why did he introduce the horrible story of a woman, now a patient in an asylum, made insane by blows inflicted with a heavy ruler on her head, by a brute in human form, who called himself a teacher? We cannot suspect him of wishing to excite unjust odium against teachers; yet he must have known this story would do it." The editor will see, by the statement above, which is printed as made, that my object is to point out the consequences that may follow the incautious infliction of blows. He will also perceive that the unfortunate teacher was a female. I will add, that she was, so far as I can learn, a kind-hearted woman, the sister of a clergyman. Fortunately for herself, she died without knowing the extent of the injury she had done. Such must be the occasional consequences of the system of violence upheld by those who urge the necessity of whipping.

distinction of doubtful justice." If the two sexes were alike, this would be true: but they are not; all physiology is against it, all common sense is against it; and the injustice of continuing a rule which makes no distinction of age or sex is most unmistakable. We do therefore most strenuously urge the abolition of the corporal punishment of girls, because the best public schools are successfully taught without it; because it is not permitted in private schools; and, finally, for reasons founded on the immutable laws of our Maker. He who declares that he cannot control our girls without resort to blows, or cannot use the gentle qualities of the many to control the perversity of the very few, has not yet risen to the level of his calling. He has yet to learn that it is the soft-falling rain, the sunshine, and the gentle dew, and not the crushing tornado, which bring forth the fruits that are fitted to nourish and develop.

But if there are still some who, from obstinacy or perversity, resist all those influences which the faithful and skilful teacher knows how to use, then let her be held as one diseased, and removed from those she is injuring, and instructed elsewhere; until she gives evidence of that more healthy condition which will qualify her for again enjoying those advantages which the city so lavishly prepares for her.

There are certain points, not touched upon by the Cambridge Committee in their Address, which have received the attention of teachers and others, upon which it is proper to say a few words.

Mr. Philbrick, the Superintendent of the Boston schools, is reported, in the "Daily Advertiser" of Jan. 12, 1867, to have laid down certain rules with regard to corporal punishment. The fifth is as follows: "In determining the amount, due regard should be had to the temperament and phrenological developments of the child. One blow would be as much to one of nervous temperament, as two would be to one

of sanguine temperament, with large combativeness." If "due regard" were had to the teachings of physiology, no young woman or girl would receive a blow in a public school. But Mr. Philbrick proposes, as a guide, phrenology, which is a false guide, and will, almost inevitably, lead to the grossest injustice. If he had investigated such matters, he would know that it is among the lowest of the conjectural arts. He would know that more than one-sixth of the so-called organs are entirely beyond the reach of investigation during life. If he attempts to examine these "phrenological developments" that are accessible, does he know what belongs to the coverings of the organs, what to fat, what to muscle, what to bone, what to disease? Does he know what is the condition of the "organ" as to excitement or sympathy with other organs in health and disease,—the influence of sex and activity? Does he know the influence of the blood, in its various conditions, modified by food, drink, or otherwise? Has he carefully studied the combination of "developments"? Does he not know, that, according to phrenologists, these combinations are all-important? that *secretiveness* and *acquisitiveness* make a thief, if *conscientiousness* is small,—a desirable character if it is large? Has he studied anatomy, physiology, and pathology, until he has acquired that accuracy in *diagnosis* which is the best test of the skilled physician? And yet all this he must do before he is competent to apply his rule successfully to practice. It was a true remark of Goethe, that the principles of phrenology, as a system of psychology, may be true; but the time for their application, as an art, has not yet arrived. Besides, Mr. Philbrick is rather unfortunate in his own knowledge of phrenology. In his illustration, he gives us to understand, that a child who happens to have a "development," which he calls "*combativeness*," large, may be whipped twice as much as one who has it small. Now, the phrenologists say just the reverse: they say that every exer-



cise of a large organ only develops it; that we should develop the other organs, and so diminish the influence of *combative-ness*. In other words, the child should not be whipped at all. And withal he ignores that most obvious and most important distinction,—the *distinction of sex*.

The "Boston schoolmasters, two-thirds of the whole number," have seen fit, by a formal vote, to indorse the rebuke and censure of those physiologists and physicians who condemn the corporal punishment of females at the most critical period of their lives. Having rejected the advice of those who are usually consulted with regard to matters so nearly related to their peculiar studies, it is to be hoped they will not follow the lead of persons who content themselves with those scraps of anatomy and pathology which they may have picked up at random; and who, like all superficial persons, are ready to apply such knowledge to the solution of the most important practical questions.

Mr. H. H. Lincoln, in his address on school discipline, asks, with regard to whipping, "Is its use injurious to the teacher? If it be, then some of us who have taught so long, and been obliged occasionally to resort to it, must be by this time considerably demoralized. . . . It has always seemed to me, that a disagreeable duty, conscientiously discharged, was elevating in its tendencies upon the moral nature."—"Physical pain, inflicted by a kind-hearted teacher, is a self-sacrificing act." With the kind-hearted, no doubt this is true,—and we have among our teachers some of the kindest hearts, respected and loved by all their pupils: of such we would speak only under a sense of the obligation of our community towards them for their faithful services. But a schoolmaster who tasks his inventive powers in the production of instruments for the infliction of pain, and uses them upon a young girl or a young woman until he extorts screams, or sees the expression of agony upon her face, or the wales or stripes upon her person, which

assure him that justice is satisfied or she is *subdued*,—so far from finding such an act “elevating in its tendencies upon the moral nature,” will, in the end, find his own sensibilities blunted. At the meeting of the American Institute of Instruction, a member of the Institute, and a teacher,—immediately after a proposition was made to limit the whipping of girls and young women, by requiring that the consent of the Committee be first obtained,—was understood to declare, “If such checks are imposed, no man, with the feelings of a man, would ever take charge of a school.” Such expressions, and such restlessness under salutary restraint and proper checks established by the Committee, and this determination to punish, if prevented in one way, in some other even worse, does not savor so much of “a self-sacrificing act” as of another and less creditable spirit. It leads one to think, as Mr. Lincoln suggests, that some “must be by this time considerably demoralized.” It is a law of human nature, that he who frequently inflicts punishment becomes callous to the suffering he produces; his power of measuring it diminishes. History is full of instances: it is unnecessary to quote them. Those who are observant of criminal courts are aware of it. The judges of such courts have more than once been removed, and even the court abolished, to prevent a further increase in the severity of punishments already become cruel. The schoolmaster is no exception to this law. If he is in the daily habit of inflicting pain upon children, he will become less sensitive to their sufferings; and he must guard himself with great care, or he may, before he is aware of it, pass the limits of humanity.\* If the whipping of children is “a self-sacrificing

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\* It may be said that physicians and surgeons frequently produce pain, and they should therefore become callous to suffering. But they never punish. No one can point to a single instrument in the whole armory of the surgeon, and say, This was invented for the production of pain. They never expect good to come of pain; they know that it complicates every case in which it exists, and is by so much an injury. The effort of their lives is to relieve suffering; and the further they advance, the more they realize the

act," as Mr. Lincoln states, he will doubtless hail with joy the day when he shall be relieved, as we trust he soon will be, of the peculiarly self-sacrificing act of whipping girls and young women.

"When we are asked," says Mr. Lincoln, "by those high in authority, to give up the use of physical force in the government of our schools, we feel like saying, in reply, 'United States of America, disband your armies, demolish your forts, sink your monitors! State of Massachusetts, destroy your coat of arms, abolish your prisons and constabulary force! City of Boston, pull down your jails and dismiss your police! when you — Nation, State, and City — can govern full-grown, reasoning men without force, then will we school-teachers of America promise to govern wayward, impulsive, unreasoning children without force.'" So far as "force" means whipping, it is not only given up, but has not been permitted, even in the penitentiaries, houses of correction, and jails of this Commonwealth for years. And yet we see nothing of the wholesale destruction so minutely described above, nor are we likely to. Perhaps the abolition of the whipping of girls in schools would be followed by no worse consequences.

At a recent meeting of schoolmasters in Waltham, there was a pretty general complaint of constantly diminishing respect

necessity of doing so. With hearts full of gratitude to the Giver of all good, they hail with joy those twin stars of medicine, opium and ether, before which pain flees, as darkness before the sun.

Perhaps allowance should be made for the different professional views of the same subject. The great object of the physician is to relieve suffering. He also knows that much of the petulance and irritability of temper of children, which lead to the greater part of school offences, depend upon changes and developments incident to their age; and that, to control such petulance and irritability, requires more effort than would be required by an adult. He may therefore take a very different view of school discipline from a clergyman, who deals with virtue in the abstract, and who deems it his professional duty to denounce sin and sinners, and, by setting before them every form of suffering, physical and spiritual, drive them from the error of their ways; a duty that, zealously performed, produces a state of mind which, however inoperative under ordinary circumstances, has often, when armed with power, led to merciless coercion.



for teachers. It is to be feared this complaint is well founded. At any rate, it is not probable that the respect is very likely to increase, so long as the present course is pursued and so strongly defended by the masters. However it has been brought about, or whoever is answerable for it, the picture of a strong man whipping a little girl of six or seven, or a young woman of sixteen or eighteen, is not an agreeable picture; and, as to which is the darkest object in that picture, there will be but little difference of opinion. This complaint of disrespect does not, probably, come from those who can govern our daughters without blows, but from those who declare it impossible; and when these last learn that teachers without whips are alone wanted, they will, perhaps, think the grounds for complaint materially increased.

It will be observed, that the rule against which we are now contending, allows, with the consent of the principal, of the whipping of a female, without regard to age, whether she be in the Primary School or the High School. This is not a mere oversight. The attention of the Committee has been drawn to the fact, and a proposition made to exempt young women of a marriageable age; but it was rejected. Neither is this rule an inoperative rule. We have sufficient evidence, over the signatures of the whole Board, that a young woman of sixteen, above the ordinary age of puberty, has been whipped, and the whipping sustained as being within the rule. Now, whatever be the opinion of these gentlemen upon this point, the community is not with them. This rule allows a punishment to be inflicted upon a young woman by a man, who may be a stranger to her except as a teacher, which could not legally be inflicted in any penitentiary in the State, and which, inflicted by a husband upon his wife, would be deemed sufficient cause for divorce. The community feels that there is a certain respect due to the sex, which school discipline should not only never break down, but should constantly increase.

It is upon this respect and consideration she must mainly depend in after-life for her protection against the superior physical strength of man. It is this respect which marks the difference between civilization and barbarism. It may be that much of the suffering and abuse of wives among the poorer classes — perhaps among the higher classes also — is due to the education of their husbands in the public schools. A husband who chastises his wife does no more than a Cambridge schoolmaster might do to that same woman if she were his pupil, for whispering, as in the case just mentioned, or for the neglect of a lesson, and be sustained by the whole Committee, including seven clergymen. When we consider how much a woman will undergo to save her children from the disgrace of public notoriety, we may judge something of what many may suffer for the want of that respect which the discipline of our schools does so little to foster.

It is frequently argued, especially by clergymen and schoolmasters, that punishment is a part of the Divine plan, and corporal punishment in schools is but a carrying-out of the Divine plan; that there is a divine right of schoolmasters as well as a divine right of kings. "Every law he has made, — physical, mental, moral, or spiritual, — if violated, brings its appropriate penalty; until, by repeated suffering for continued violations, we are forced, or if you please we are forcibly drawn, into obedience."\* But many persons will ask, Is there any physical law to which man is subject, to which the lower animals are not also subject; and can the consequences of the infringement of a physical law be in any sense a punishment of those animals? Besides, they are not ready to admit, that violations of moral laws are followed in the Divine plan by physical penalty, in this world, or the reverse. They see no evidence that those

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\* H. H. Lincoln. *School Discipline: Its Objects and Methods*, p. 6.

eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem. But, if the Deity has a plan, will he not carry it out in his own way? and is it not safe to leave the matter in his hands? The children, I doubt not, will say with David, when left to choose his punishment, "Let me fall now into the hand of the Lord, for very great are his mercies; but let me not fall into the hand of man." But, even if punishment is a part of the Divine plan, is there any evidence that the corporal punishment of little girls, for whispering or not getting their lessons, is a part of that plan? A clergyman, in a religious periodical,\* who believes that such punishment is a part of the plan, illustrates his position as follows: "A boy is caught eating a green apple in school. The master gives him a flogging for it, and Nature (Deity) the colic. Where is the difference?" But, if the plan of the Deity is to be carried out in one case, why not in others? Suppose the reverend writer himself eats a green apple, or commits any other error, and suffers from violation of a physical law, would it be proper for the physician to relieve him, and thus interfere with the supposed Divine plan? Such a doctrine puts an end to all medical assistance in all diseases. The same writer says, medicine, "in one sense of the word, perhaps the truest sense, is corporal punishment." Is wine corporal punishment to the fainting? Is quinine corporal punishment to those sinking under malaria? Is opium corporal punishment, when it gives quiet sleep for heart-sickening pain? Is ether corporal punishment, when, for the most agonizing of all pains, it gives pleasant dreams? The reverend gentleman's theology may be all right, but his medicine is all wrong. The Bible says, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine." He goes on to say that "Nature (Deity) will strike fourteen hundred little children in civilized Bos-

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\* Monthly Religious Magazine, March, 1866.



ton to-day" with various pains from disease. But does this authorize the reverend gentleman to strike them again, or strike them at all? Nature destroys life daily, but this does not authorize a schoolmaster to commit murder. Such doctrine, we trust, is not good theology: it certainly is not good sense. It must be a very feeble cause that can find no better argument for its support.

We have now shown, that whipping as a punishment has ceased in Massachusetts; in her streets, penitentiaries, and jails. It has ceased in regard to girls in Holland, Prussia, Austria, and France, as appears by the declaration of the Ministers of the respective countries. In Holland, it has been forbidden, with regard to boys and girls, for nearly half a century; and in the other countries the punishment of boys is placed under restrictions unknown here. Notwithstanding this evidence, it is argued that the circumstances differ; that, under monarchical rule, obedience to the monarch is inculcated from the earliest youth: but, inasmuch as the kings are not the schoolmasters, it is difficult to see the connection between this statement and the matter in question. Others think that the family government is different. They say, that, so long as corporal punishment is used in families, it must be continued in school; that there are no more objections to it in the one case than the other; that the teacher stands *in loco parentis*. But it must be remembered, that, after all, the teacher is not the parent: he has not the parental feelings and instincts which not only restrain him from harming his child, but lead him to protect his child from the violence of others, even at the hazard of his life. The relations of parents and masters to children are not alike. Others, again, think that as large a proportion of the population is not taught in the public schools of the countries above mentioned as in Massachusetts; but we have shown by figures that the reverse is the fact. Others say, that our teachers, as a class, are inferior to the teachers of those countries.

They also say we must hold the power of corporal punishment *in terrorem*, as a reserved force, like the military force or the *posse comitatus*, to be used in extreme cases only. So far as girls are concerned, the rule authorizing such punishment should be forthwith abolished, as unsuited for the present stage of civilization. We have no hesitation in saying, that no girl, who cannot be governed by a skilful teacher without blows, is a fit associate for good girls; and for their safety should be removed. With regard to boys, such reserved force may be desirable and necessary. But so long as we are liable to have young and inexperienced or unskilful teachers; so long as they are liable to be sick, exhausted, and irritable; so long as they not unfrequently look upon violations of school rules as an insult to themselves; so long as the struggle that not unfrequently ensues is dangerous to both teacher and pupil; "until," as Dr. Vogel, of Leipsic, says, "we teachers have become fully competent to our work,"—it would be much better if the power of corporal punishment should be placed under the supervision of those who are not exposed to these unfavorable influences. It might be inflicted, as in Austria, only with the consent of the parent or guardian, and in his presence. Or, as it seems to me, this reserved force could, with great propriety, be placed where the laws of Massachusetts place the power of expulsion from school,—in the hands of the school committee; and to be exercised, as that power is exercised, only with the consent of the committee or a member of it, in each case, first obtained. That unfortunate combination, of injured party, complainant, judge, and executioner, all in the same person and almost at the same instant, without parental instincts to modify it, will then cease. It will be a protection to both teacher and pupil.

The Committee, teachers, and children will then be brought into relations which are desirable; they will have opportunities for investigation, advice, and impartial decision. Under such

a rule, there is good reason to believe that the necessity of such punishment will be greatly diminished through its deliberation and gravity, and by the moral power thus brought to bear upon the disobedient and refractory. Hasty and unnecessary punishment would be prevented, and time given for reflection on both sides ;\* and the punishment in question would then become in practice what it is now in theory,—a last resort.

It may be objected, that such a course would diminish the respect for the teacher. For this there is no good reason. It will be observed, that the proposed change is but a single step further than that of the Committee last year, which takes the power of punishment from the assistants, and gives it to the principal only,—a rule which, we have reason to believe, has worked well.

The two instances which follow place the benefits which may arise from the interviews between Committee and pupils in so pleasant a light, that I cannot refrain from giving them.

President Hill, of Harvard College, when a member of the School Committee of Waltham, Mass., visited a school when the master was just whipping one of his pupils, a frequent offender, and a frequent sufferer from the rod. Said the President, "Do not whip him the next time, but send him to my house." The master assented, and the boy was, a day or two after, sent to the "Committee-man." He was shown engravings and books and pieces of art, and whatever it was thought would please him. When he had become thoroughly interested, the President said to him, "You see here a great many things pleasant and useful, that you do not

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\* It is said of Michael Walsh, a schoolmaster in Newburyport many years ago, and the author of an arithmetic once much used, that, being a choleric Irishman, he guarded himself from the effects of his hasty temper by tying, in several hard knots, around the handle of the water-pail, the cord with which he whipped his pupils. He would often, when excited by a boy, run to the pail ; but the excitement, and the hard knots, and the danger of spilling the water, would delay him so long, that the result was usually more favorable for both parties.



have in your father's house at home. Now, I am able to have these things principally because, when I was at school, I was attentive and obedient; and, if you will be attentive to your studies, and be a good boy, you will be able, by and by, to have a great many things you cannot otherwise have." The boy was moved: he promised diligence and obedience, and, with words of encouragement, was dismissed. Sometime afterward, when again visiting the same school, another boy was to be disciplined. The President said again, "Turn him over to me." — "Yes," said the master, "if you will promise to flog him." — "But has not John Mullen been a good boy?" — "Oh, yes! a very good boy. I have had no complaint to make of him since he was at your house; but he ought to have been flogged."

During the past summer, a girl eleven or twelve years of age, of Irish parentage, was sent by the master to a member of our present School Board, as a thoroughly vicious, incorrigible girl, to whom punishment did no good. She was accompanied by her father. Mr. ——— talked to her, but could get no answer. She sat sullen. Her father ordered her to speak, and threatened a whipping when he got home. He was begged not to threaten. He replied, "She obeys nobody but me: she is afraid of me." Finding he could not interest her, Mr. ——— sent her to his wife. At first she would say but little. She gave her flowers, with which she was much pleased. Bringing to bear those influences which a kind-hearted woman knows so well how to use, she soon won her way to the girl's heart. She then asked about her school,—if she liked to go to school. She said, No; she did not like her teacher: but her father and mother would be very angry if she did not go. "But you should go and learn; and it will not be long before you will be done with school." She said it would be long to her. "Then," said Mrs. ———, "you know it is easy to promise."—"But," said the girl, "it is hard to keep."—"Can't you promise Mr. ——— to

be a good girl." She shook her head. "Could you not promise him to try? If you will only try, you will improve." She said, Yes; and did promise. She was then dismissed, to come again at the end of a week, if she had been good. At the end of a week she came. She said she had tried to be good, and had not said a bad word the whole week. Her good conduct was confirmed by others. She was now a different girl. She looked at the books and pictures; she played with the baby; and became thoroughly interested. They walked in the garden, they gathered strawberries; but, when she was told to eat them, she said, "If you are willing, I will carry them home to my little sister." From the time of that visit, her teachers say she has much improved; and her report has continued to be favorable. Did not that young mother gain a victory of which she might well be proud,—one more brilliant than any that violence could possibly win? Scolding and whipping, at home and at school, the girl could bear; she was used to these: but kindness and gentleness she could not withstand.

It is often asked what is to be done with those who prove incorrigible under the plan which does not contemplate corporal punishment. This question is often asked in a manner which implies that no failures occur under the other system. The answer is, We propose to do with them that which is done with those proving incorrigible under any other plan; that of corporal punishment, for instance, when they shall be found to be injurious to the best interests of the school. But we claim that fewer girls will be found incorrigible without whipping, than with. And it may be said generally, that those who are treated kindly, especially boys, will be more likely to do well afterward, than those who are rendered sullen by harshness, and who have wrongs, whether fancied or real, for which they retaliate upon society for the rest of their lives.

But it is said, Your plan is all very well theoretically;

but it will never answer practically. The theory is pronounced good, and, inasmuch as this is the opinion of our opponents, it may be considered of peculiar value; the practical result can be demonstrated only by trial, and this is all that is desired. Let the experiment be tried of abolishing the rule authorizing corporal punishment, at least as far as girls are concerned, in good faith, and with an honest purpose to make it successful; and await the result.

Indeed, it has already been demonstrated by the teachers themselves, after a year's trial, that the girls in the High and Grammar Schools—containing nearly three thousand pupils, about half the whole school population—can be managed without whipping; and it would be very strange if still younger children could not be managed in the same way. But, to secure success, the schools should be exclusively in the hands of the friends of the measure; and they should be held responsible for the result.

Let the citizens choose a Board which is a unit upon this question,—a Board which will sustain those teachers who are right upon this question,—and we have no fear of the result.

There is no fear that the citizens of Cambridge will forget their duty as to teachers and buildings necessary to carry out this improvement in school discipline. We know well that those schools, the pupils of which are drawn from families where, from whatever cause, proper attention to the children cannot be given, should receive more attention, and have proportionally a larger number of teachers, than the schools for those more fortunately situated. We know that in no other way can we so well make amends for misfortunes for which the children are not at all accountable.







